## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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- 1. A method of collecting, storing and processing usage data from a device, comprising:
- 5 (a) extracting the usage data from the device, wherein the usage data is associated with a customer identifier;
  - (b) obfuscating, but not eliminating, the customer identifier from the extracted usage data; and
- (c) correlating the extracted usage data over a period of time using the obfuscated customer identifier.
  - 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the usage data is processed in accordance with a privacy policy recorded for each customer.
- The method of claim 1, wherein both the customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-in" customers.
  - 4. The method of claim 1, wherein only the obfuscated customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-neutral" customers.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein neither the customer identifier nor the usage data are stored for "opt-out" customers.

- 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the obfuscating step is performed only for extracted usage data associated with an "opt-neutral" customer.
  - 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the obfuscating step comprises creating a replacement identifier for the customer identifier from the extracted usage data.

- 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the obfuscating step comprises translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into the replacement identifier.
- 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the translating step comprises performing a translation function that produces a unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.
  - 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the translating step comprises performing a translation function that produces a non-unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.
    - 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the translating step comprises performing a one-way translation function that has an inverse function that is difficult to perform.
- 15 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the device sends the viewing usage data along with a usage identifier that is independent of the customer identifier.
  - 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the obfuscating step comprises translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into a replacement identifier using the usage identifier.
  - 14. An apparatus for collecting, storing and processing usage data from a device, comprising:
  - (a) means for extracting the usage data from the device, wherein the usage data is associated with a customer identifier;
    - (b) means for obfuscating, but not eliminating, the customer identifier from the extracted usage data; and
    - (c) means for correlating the extracted usage data over a period of time using the obfuscated customer identifier.

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- 15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the usage data is processed in accordance with a privacy policy recorded for each customer.
- 16. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein both the customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-in" customers.
  - 17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein only the obfuscated customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-neutral" customers.
- 10 18. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein neither the customer identifier nor the usage data are stored for "opt-out" customers.

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19. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the means for obfuscating is performed only for extracted usage data associated with an "opt-neutral" customer.

20. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the means for obfuscating comprises means for creating a replacement identifier for the customer identifier from the extracted usage data.

- 21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the means for obfuscating comprises means for translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into the replacement identifier.
- The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the means for translating comprises
  means for performing a translation function that produces a unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.
  - 23. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the means for translating comprises means for performing a translation function that produces a non-unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.

24. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the means for translating comprises means for performing a one-way translation function that has an inverse function that is difficult to perform.

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- 25. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the device sends the viewing usage data along with a usage identifier that is independent of the customer identifier.
- 26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the means for obfuscating comprises means for translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into a replacement identifier using the usage identifier.
  - 27. An article of manufacture embodying logic for collecting, storing and processing usage data from a device, the logic comprising:
  - (a) extracting the usage data from the device, wherein the usage data is associated with a customer identifier;
    - (b) obfuscating, but not eliminating, the customer identifier from the extracted usage data; and
- (c) correlating the extracted usage data over a period of time using the obfuscated customer identifier.
  - 28. The article of claim 27, wherein the usage data is processed in accordance with a privacy policy recorded for each customer.
- 25 29. The article of claim 27, wherein both the customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-in" customers.
  - 30. The article of claim 27, wherein only the obfuscated customer identifier and the usage data are stored for "opt-neutral" customers.

- 31. The article of claim 27, wherein neither the customer identifier nor the usage data are stored for "opt-out" customers.
- 32. The article of claim 27, wherein the obfuscating step is performed only for extracted usage data associated with an "opt-neutral" customer.
  - 33. The article of claim 27, wherein the obfuscating step comprises creating a replacement identifier for the customer identifier from the extracted usage data.
- 10 34. The article of claim 33, wherein the obfuscating step comprises translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into the replacement identifier.
  - 35. The article of claim 34, wherein the translating step comprises performing a translation function that produces a unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.
    - 36. The article of claim 34, wherein the translating step comprises performing a translation function that produces a non-unique replacement identifier for every customer identifier.

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- 37. The article of claim 27, wherein the translating step comprises performing a one-way translation function that has an inverse function that is difficult to perform.
- 38. The article of claim 27, wherein the device sends the viewing usage data along with a usage identifier that is independent of the customer identifier.
  - 39. The article of claim 38, wherein the obfuscating step comprises translating the customer identifier from the extracted usage data into a replacement identifier using the usage identifier.